

PART 0—VALUES, STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT, AND RELATED RESPONSIBILITIES

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SOURCE: 31 FR 5828, Apr. 15, 1966, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Core Values and Characteristics of the Department

SOURCE: 77 FR 41275, July 13, 2012 unless otherwise noted.

§ 0.600 General.

This section describes the Core Values and Characteristics that serve as internal guidelines for employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). These Core Values and Characteristics define VA employees, articulate what VA stands for, and underscore its moral obligation to veterans, their families, and other beneficiaries. They are intended to establish one overarching set of guidelines that apply to all VA Administrations and staff offices, confirming the values already instilled in many VA employees and enforcing their commitment to provide the best service possible to veterans, their families, and their caretakers.

§ 0.601 Core Values.

VA's Core Values define VA employees. They describe the organization's culture and character, and serve as the foundation for the way VA employees should interact with each other, as well as with people outside the organization. They also serve as a common bond between all employees regardless of their grade, specialty area, or location. These Core Values are Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence. Together, the first letters of the Core Values spell "I CARE," and VA employees should adopt this motto and these Core Values in their day-to-day operations.

(a) *Integrity*. VA employees will act with high moral principle, adhere to the highest professional standards, and maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom they engage.

(b) *Commitment*. VA employees will work diligently to serve veterans and other beneficiaries, be driven by an earnest belief in VA's mission, and fulfill their individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.

(c) *Advocacy*. VA employees will be truly veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of veterans and other beneficiaries.

(d) *Respect*. VA employees will treat all those they serve and with whom they work with dignity and respect, and they will show respect to earn it.

(e) *Excellence*. VA employees will strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement, and be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for their actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

§ 0.602 Core Characteristics.

While Core Values define VA employees, the Core Characteristics define what VA stands for and what VA strives to be as an organization. These are aspirational goals that VA wants its employees, veterans, and the American people to associate with the Department and with its workforce. These Core characteristics describe the traits all VA organizations should possess and demonstrate, and they identify the qualities needed to successfully accomplish today's missions and